

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

----- 126407

O 011047Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2348

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

USDEL ALEXANDRIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 2540

EXDIS

FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILOPS IS EG

SUBJ: PROBLEM OF AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION IN SINAI

REF: STATE 85390; CAIRO 2624

1. REFS CONCERNED INCIDENT OF 26 APR WHEN IDF RADAR DETECTED "HELICOPTER" OVER UNEF ZONE IN SUEZ DISENGAGEMENT AREA. DEPARTMENT'S SPEEDY ASSISTANCE IN CALLING CAIRO AND CONFIRMING THAT NO US HELICOPTERS WERE INVOLVED WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY ISRAELIS.

2. I AM CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT FUTURE INCIDENTS OF THIS TYPE COULD HAVE A LESS HAPPY ENDING. IF THE IDF VIEWS OFF-COURSE HELO OR AIRCRAFT AS A THREAT, OUR CONFIRMATION THAT IT IS NOT US AIRCRAFT COULD CONCEIVABLY BE VIEWED BY NERVOUS IDF AS CLEARANCE TO SHOOT.

3. DURING MEETING WITH OUR ASST AIR ATTACHE 30 APRIL, BG HARLEV, CHIEF OF IAF INTELL, SAID IDF NOW CONVINCED THAT SUSPECT RADAR BLIP OF 26 APR WAS PROBABLY CAUSED BY ATMOSPHERICS AND WAS NOT A HELO AT ALL. IN ANY CASE, HE WAS

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ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE FUTURE RECURRENCE AND REQUESTED

THAT WE EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF SETTING UP COMMUNICATIONS WITH
USS IWO JIMA TO GIVE US AN INSTANT IDENTIFICATION CAPABILITY.

4. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT APPROACH. NOT ONLY
COULD IT LEAD TO THE SERIOUS RESULTS DESCRIBED IN PARA 2
ABOVE, BUT IT WOULD BE A STEP BACKWARD IN THE TENUOUS PROCESS
OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT
AND BELIEVE THAT THIS
SUBJECT IS MADE TO ORDER FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND
EGYPT, EITHER DIRECT OR, MORE PROBABLY, THROUGH UNEF. I
PROPOSE THAT MY DATT FLOAT THIS SUGGESTION TO THE IDF, POINTING
OUT THAT UNEF WAS THE PRIMARY CHANNEL USED BY GOI TO RECOVER
A BUSLOAD OF UJA TYPES WHICH STRAYED INTO EGYPTIAN ZONE AND
WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO BE THE BEST WAY TO AVOID SERIOUS
INCIDENT IF AIRCRAFT OF EITHER SIDE SHOULD INADVERTENTLY STRAY OFF
COURSE.

5. IF YOU AGREE WITH MY THINKING, YOU MAY WANT TO PLANT THE
SAME SUGGESTION IN CAIRO DURING YOUR DISCUSSIONS THERE.
KEATING

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NNN

Message Attributes

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